



# Scuttlebutt

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**December 2019**

**Issue 256**

<p><b>YCCC Holiday Party &amp; General Meeting</b> <b>December 8, 2019 - Noon to 4:00 pm – Dinner at 1:00 pm</b> <b>Auburn/Webster Elks Lodge #2118</b> <b>754 Southbridge St, Auburn MA 01501</b></p>
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## **CAPTAIN'S CABIN**

Another year of CQWW is done. Hope everyone had as much fun as I did! No Dxpeditions this year (sob), just playing at a local Multi-2 entry.

We had our first snowfall Sunday night. What a time for my snowblower to break! For want of a \$3 plastic bracket, I'm at the mercy of the elements and the local snow plow guy. This winter has been forecast as a "high snow" winter- are you ready? Can your antennas handle it? I thought I was ready.

Next up is our annual Holiday Party. It will be at the Auburn Elks Hall on Sunday December 8. I'll be coming off a full effort in the ARRL 160M contest that weekend, so I'm already loading up on sleep.

Just before ARRL DX, we will be having another YCCC Meeting. Date is still unknown, but we're working on it.

### Upcoming Ham Conventions?

There is the Orlando Hamcation the first weekend in February. I went for the first time last year and had a blast! Its a great excuse to get away from the snow and cold for a couple of days! Dayton will be coming up the weekend of May 15-17, with a Contest University set for Thursday May 14. If you've never been, Contest University is a great way to improve your contesting skills. There are a variety of workshops geared for the relative newcomer and the seasoned pro.

Well, snow plow hasn't shown up yet, and I have to go out and do some more shoveling so my wife can go to work. Oh, and order the part for the snow blower that broke, and set up the Rx listening loops for evaluation. I'm so busy now I don't know when I had time to work!

Happy Holidays to All! Hope Santa brings that new rig for Christmas!

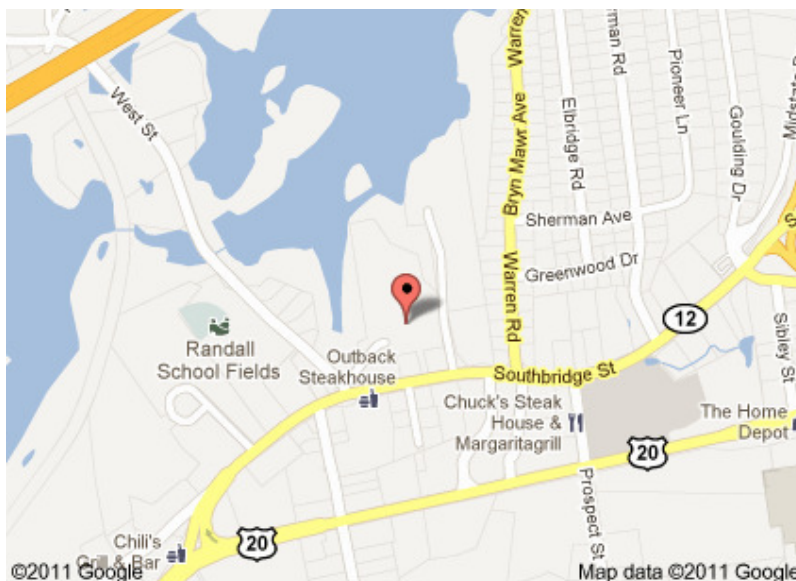
Dennis W1UE  
YCCC President

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## Directions to Auburn Elks Hall

754 Southbridge St, Auburn, MA 01501



**From East & West via Mass Pike Interstate 90;** take Exit 10 onto Route 12 South. Travel 7/10 of a mile, pass through two sets of traffic lights, pass by Waterman Road and Warren Road on the right. Take a right into the Lodge before Jiffy Lube.

**From East, via Interstate 290 West;** Exit 8 in Auburn onto Route 12 South. Travel 9/10 of a mile, pass through two sets of traffic lights, pass by Waterman Road and Warren Road on the right. Take a right into the Lodge before Jiffy Lube.

**From North, via interstate 190;** South onto Interstate 290 West. Then take Exit 8 in Auburn onto Route 12 South. Travel 9/10 of a mile, pass through two sets of traffic lights, pass by Waterman Road and Warren Road on the right. Take a right into the Lodge before Jiffy Lube.

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## Area Managers

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<b>NVT (802)</b>	-----OPEN-----	-----	-----
<b>QUEBEC</b>	Guy Lemieux, VE2BWL	-----	<a href="mailto:guy@guylemieux.com">guy@guylemieux.com</a>

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# YCCC General Meeting Minutes

## October 20, 2019

President Dennis W1UE called the October 20, 2019 general meeting of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club at the Sturbridge Host Hotel to order at 1:11 pm.

President Dennis W1UE then announced the agenda for the meeting.

President Dennis called for the Secretaries Report which was given by Brian NJ1F. A motion to accept the report was made by Paul K1XM, and Seconded by Charlie N1RR. The Motion Carried.

President Dennis called for the Treasurers Report which was given by Chet N8RA. .

A motion to accept the report was made by Terry W1TR and Seconded by Charlie N1RR. The Motion Carried.

President Dennis W1UE asked if there was any old business. There was no old business.

President Dennis W1UE announced that there is a new ARRL contesting reflector starting. Dennis is the moderator and it will provide a platform for members and contests participants to interact and share idea about ARRL contests.

President Dennis W1UE asked if there was anyone wanting to join the club. Rich K2RR told the group about their contesting activities. Paul K1XM made a motion to welcome them aboard. Seconded by Craig K1QX the motion carried.

Rich N1IXF made a motion that the club sponsors the following plaques, Single Op all Band HF RTTY CQWW and ARRL RTTY. Motion was seconded by Paul K1XM

During the discussion Eric KV1J made a motion to sponsor the Single Op all band DX in the ARRL RTTY contest. This was seconded by Terry W1TR. The Motion Carried.

President Dennis W1UE introduced Bob W1RH who gave Dennis the WK6I award (Bottle of Wine) for his third place out-of-state finish in the California QSO party. Congratulations Dennis.

President Dennis W1UE introduced Joe W1JR to give a presentation titled "Can you hear me now". Joe shared with the group information on hearing, how to protect your hearing, and options for those with hearing loss.

President Dennis W1UE then announced a 10 minute break.

President Dennis W1UE reconvened the meeting at 2:35 and asked for a roll call of members and what their CQWW plans are.

President Dennis W1UE then played a video that K5ZD made explaining SO2R operation. The link is <https://k5zd.com/so2r-videos/> Dennis had a working demo of SO2R setup for member to try out.

President Dennis W1UE introduced Fred K1VR who gave an update on the latest Executive Board Meeting which took place in Denver. The new volunteer monitor program has 196 monitors identified, Winlink it appears that the software codec is going to be available on a raspberry PI platform those eliminating the \$1800 modem. Life Long Learning plans to have "How to videos" up and running in Q2 of 2020. RF Exposure may do away with the Ham Exemption for powers below 50 watts. K1VR will add a link to his Antennazoning.com website with a link to software K1TR wrote to calculate RF exposure. 60 Meter expansion is opposed by the NTIA. Amateur Radio Emergency parity act of 2020, they are currently working on the verbiage of a bill. Define a "Safe Harbor" antenna, Flag Poles antennas as Americans have the right to display an American flag, minimally visible wires, and collapsible whips. The ARRL is also going to be protecting intellectual property.

President Dennis W1UE then introduced Bob W1RH who gave an overview of a situation in California where a repeater owner was asked to pay for a tower study to remain on a municipal tower which the owner has had antennas on for a long time. The repeater owner was asked "What Public Service" is being provided as this was one of the reasons for allowing the repeater to be at the site. Bob recommends that if you or your club has a repeater at a municipal tower site and you claim it is used for public service you better have documentation of public service events it is used for.

President Dennis W1UE announced that he will be posting to the reflector a shortened list of clusters for the N1MM as well as spot filters he uses.

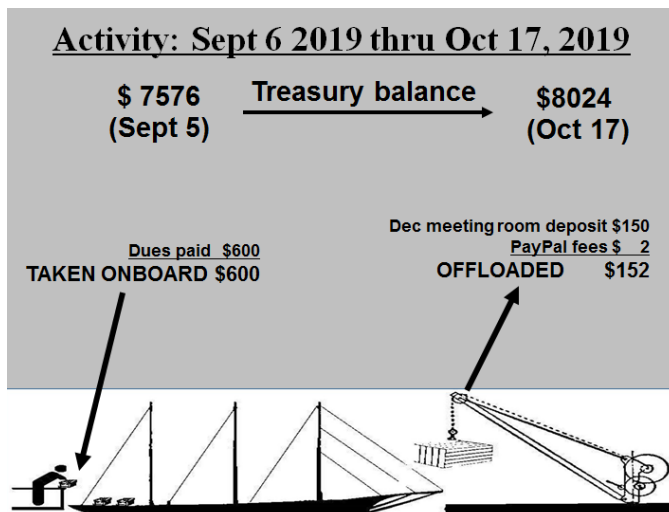
A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Paul K1XM and Seconded by Fred K1VR. The Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:18 pm

Submitted

Brian Szewczyk NJ1F

YCCC Secretary





# A Low Noise Radio Desk

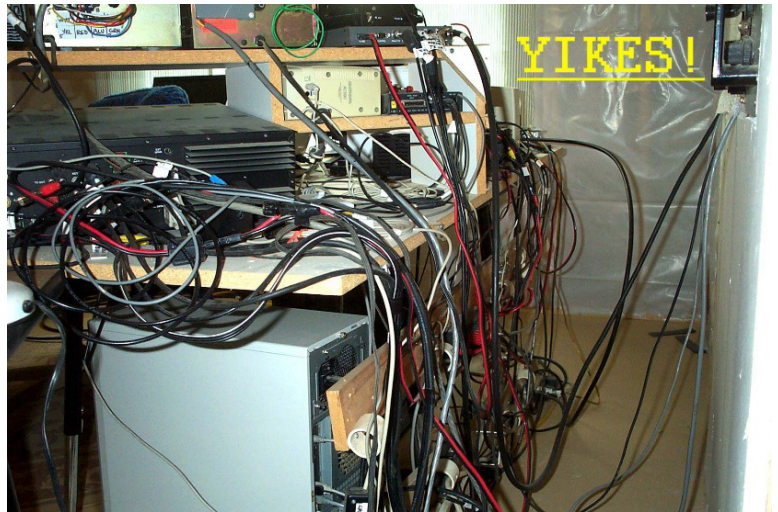
*A way to reduce RFI problems and up your receive SNR*

Chet Slabinski, N8RA

## Introduction

When my MYL and I decided to move and build a new house, my station was packed up and sat in boxes for a year. As the itch to get back on the radio grew, I put together a simple temporary setup in one corner of the unfinished basement. “Temporary” lasted a while and as more and more equipment made it to the setup, the wiring of it got out of hand and hints of RFI and cable crosstalk and noise were creeping in.

So, it was with some relief when finally, I could get back to building the radio cave having real walls, proper electrical service, and so on. That required the “temporary” setup be totally dismantled and moved out of this space before construction could proceed.



## Start with a Good Ground

Even though the radio cave construction had been delayed, outdoor grounding work was well underway. Eight-foot ground rods were driven in every 15 feet around the two outside walls of the basement radio room and went all the way back to and joined with the electrical service entrance panel ground rods on the opposite side (of course it was on that other side) of the basement. All rods were connected together with #6 bare copper wire buried a few inches below grade. A seemingly daunting project, but when done bit by bit, a rod now, a rod later, it gets done.

Coax and control cables to the towers all came through the basement wall in one area and were terminated inside the basement on two metal rack panels bonded together and connected to the outside perimeter ground system with heavy gauge wire. These panels are my designated “single point ground panel” referred to as the “SPGP” in Ward Silver’s book “Grounding and Bonding for the Radio Amateur”.

## Electrical service

The only other wires affecting the radio room galvanic integrity was the electrical service. The lighting branch circuit is separate and not interconnected to any other circuits in the room, and computer networking was changed from ethernet cable to wi-fi.

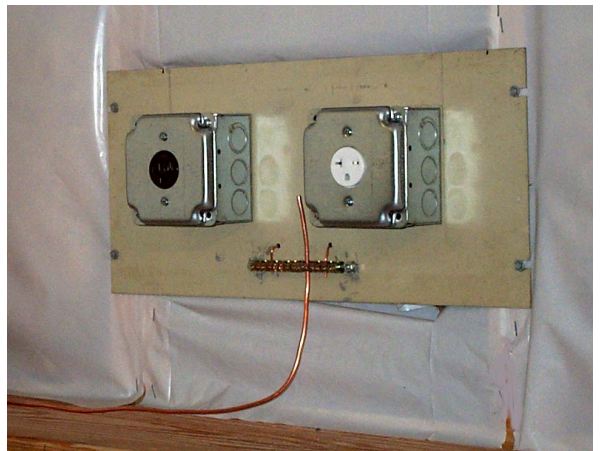
When the house was built, the electrician ran dedicated 120V and 240V lines to the radio room area and terminated them in metal boxes having single receptacles located 6 feet above the floor. I now increased the size of those junction boxes and moved them onto another rack panel, to allow their easy bonding with the SPGP. All AC power in this room is tapped onto these dedicated feeders. I knew those old chassis punches would come in handy someday to make the openings in the back of this panel.



This electrical panel is on a wall in the radio room near a corner. The heavy bare copper wire shown connected to its grounding strip runs about 3 feet to the SPGP.

Before hanging the sheetrock, the required number of GFCI protected 120V receptacles were added around the walls of the room, plus other 240V outlets were installed near planned amplifier locations. All these additional receptacle circuits were spliced inside the junction boxes to the main feeders on the panel pictured here. Of course, a permit was pulled, and inspections were done before closing the walls with sheetrock.

The perimeter ground, shack AC power, and cabling from the antennas and towers were now all tied to the SPGP.

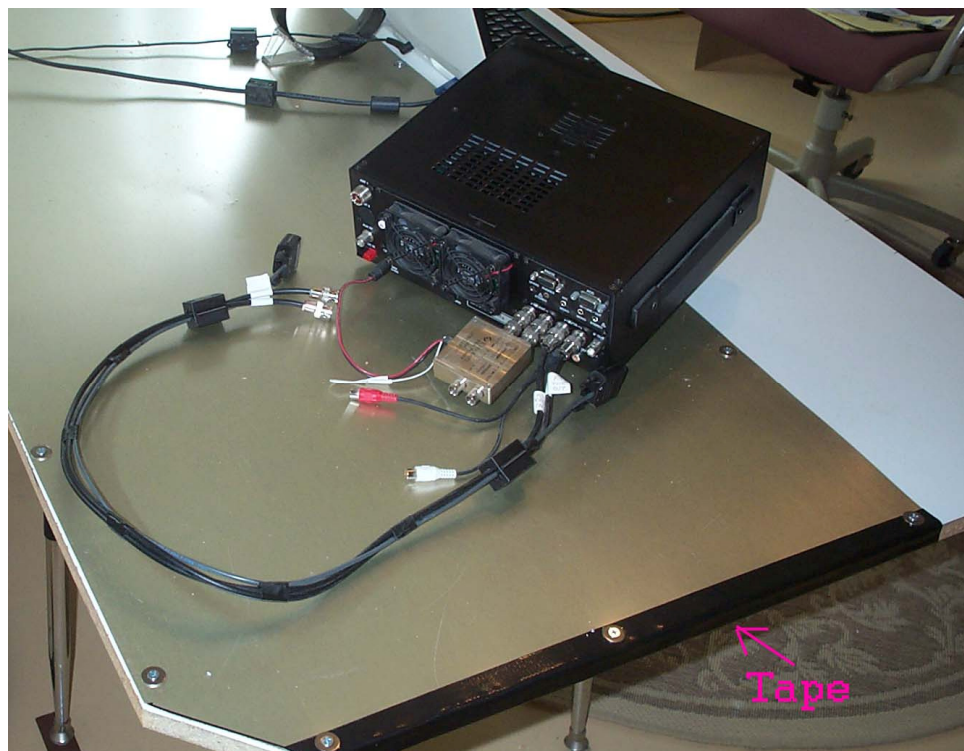


### **And now, the radio desk**

Ideally, all the shack equipment and interconnecting cables would sit upon and be bonded to a large flat ground plane connected with zero impedance to the SPGP panels. (Bonding means connecting the ground screw or metal case of all equipment to this ground plane with a short heavy wire.) Yes, the line cord ground and coax shields eventually connect to a ground somewhere, but a short low impedance direct bond wire to the ground plane shunts and reduces stray common mode currents on and off those cables.

A practical alternative to a huge ground plane floating above the floor in the shack is to lay flat metal sheets across the back of the op desktop and on its shelves, with these sheets electrically tied together with bonding wires. Home Depot and Lowes sell aluminum flashing rolls in various widths and lengths that will serve this purpose well. Some building supply stores also sell flashing pre-painted brown or white on one side.

For my desktop, I used 24" wide bare aluminum held in place with short wood screws and flat washers. I was initially concerned that the forward edge would be sharp and not lay flat so was planning to put a 1 3/4 " x 1/4 " wood strip or metal carpet edging on top of the front edge, but that proved unnecessary. The ends though, when cut to length with tin shears, are sharp, so I covered those edges with a strip of gorilla tape. If you do not want to run screws into your desk, use tape all around or put a 4'x8' panel of melamine coated wood on top of your desk like I did. NOAX offers other alternate ways in his book.





Along the back of the desk I screwed down metal boxes for AC receptacles with a switch at one end that turns off everything powered by this strip. The strip is plugged into a wall receptacle via a flexible service cord, so the desk is like a big “appliance”.

I screwed down a few multi-terminal ground strips onto the flashing for the connection of the bonding wires that would come from each piece of equipment. One of those grounding strips has a #6 bare copper wire that connects to the grounding strip on the AC service rack panel shown earlier.

This photo also shows accessory equipment shelves. These also had flashing put on their tops and bonding run to the flashing above and below. For appearance, the very visible top shelf uses flashing having a pre-painted white topside. No one notices the flashing there until I point it out.

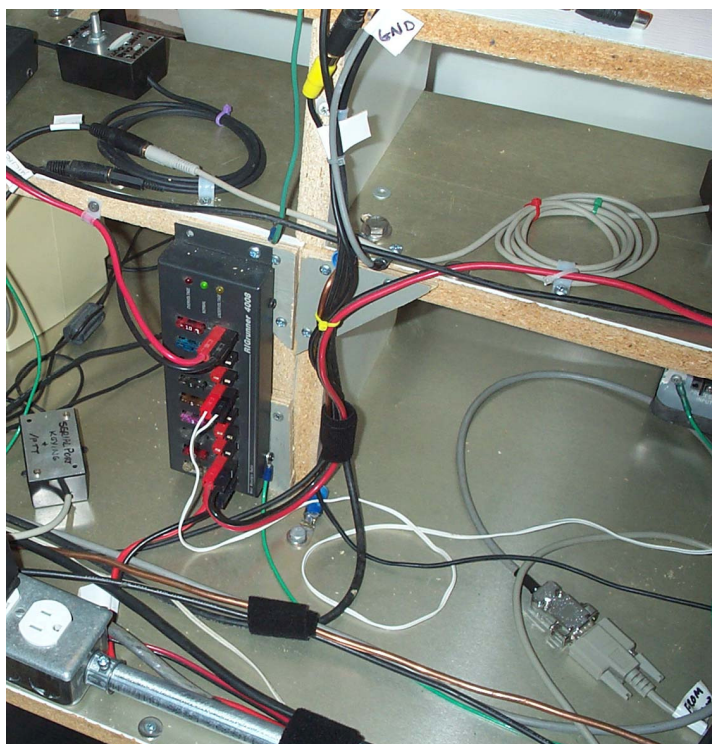
The bond wires from the case of each piece of equipment to the ground plane was made from insulated green #14, wire, often with a crimp lug on the equipment end going under a screw on its case. I used stranded wire but solid might be better because it holds its bent shape. If you are concerned that attaching bonding wires will make removal for repairs more difficult, fabricate the bond wires with quick disconnect spade terminals.

Many bonding wires were required but the work is very therapeutic. Each one you add makes you think that more problems are going away. Put ferrites on any signal cables you believe might benefit from them. W1HIS and K9YC have copious info on doing this.

Here is a photo of how it starts to look after a while. Cut to length Velcro wrap-strap holds bundles of wires together. Just to the right of the Rig Runner there is one of the heavy copper wires connecting the middle shelf to the desk ground plane below it. Other wires are bundled with it. A green bond wire from the middle to top shelf is also visible

With everything bonded to the ground planes, ground loop current is reduced. And with most of a cable's length resting upon the ground plane, the cables do not radiate or receive much noise or RFI compared to them hanging out in free space like antennas.

There is one main umbilical cord bundle that runs the desk's AC power cord, coax cables, control cables, a #6 bonding wire, etc. from the desk to the AC power and antenna SPGP panels.



From the desk's operating position side, the ground planes are not very noticeable.



Use the same techniques for equipment groups that are not integral to the main operating desk, e.g. amplifiers, VHF transverter and sequencer clusters, and bond them back to the SPGP.

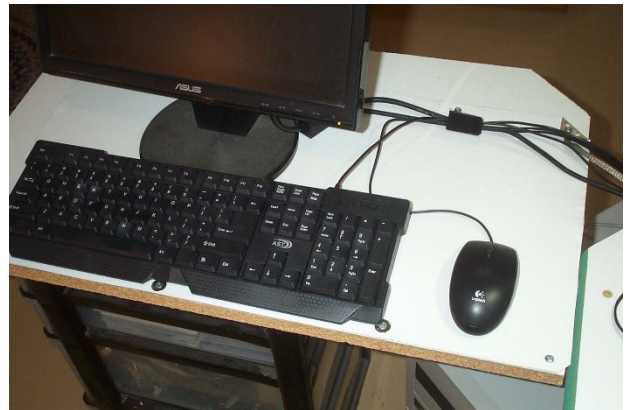
This photo is a peninsula for a second shack computer. Look hard for the white coated flashing that the computer components are sitting upon. A sharp eye will spot the bent over corner at its upper right where the bonding braid wire connects to the flashing's bare bottom side.

### Closing

After doing this, I no longer have strange problems when the beam is pointed toward the shack, and the background noise on some bands does not change when I switch some other desktop item on or click a new window on the monitor.

This technique does not apply only to first time construction.

Over the years, our interest, station, and equipment changes. Once and a while it can be very worthwhile to take it all apart and start fresh with a new operating position design, and that is a perfect time to lay down ground planes on your desk and shelves. I hope I have encouraged you by showing how easy, inexpensive, and effective it can be.



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## SO2R-Mini Announced

A new version of the YCCC SO2R Box is now (or soon will be) available.

Features of this new Arduino-based hardware/software product include:

- All inputs/outputs are standard 3.5 mm stereo cables
- No external power supply required -- works on USB-supplied voltage
- WinKey emulator and CW steering
- PTT Footswitch input and PTT steering
- Mike Input and Steering
- Headphone Audio -- AA, BB, AB, and Latch
- Headphone Audio transformer isolated
- Small and lightweight -- about 4 x 2 x 2.5" and 8 oz
- Uses only one USB port
- Compatible with major logging programs
- Price point expected to be \$50-60
- Easy to assemble kit, options available to purchase assembled units
- No switches or LEDs -- logging program to control unit

More information available at: <http://nn1c.org/so2r/>



# YCCC CLUB RESOURCE INFORMATION

**DUES AND MEMBERSHIP STUFF** Dues for the year are payable as of January 1<sup>st</sup>. The YCCC has adopted a multi-tiered membership format as follows: Please note that payment of dues IS NOT a prerequisite for contributing scores to the Club aggregate, but IS for the various YCCC Awards Programs

**Full Member** - \$15/yr (Eligible for YCCC member benefits and electronic "Ebutt" delivery of Club newsletter)

**Full Member** - \$30/yr (Eligible for YCCC member benefits and paper delivery of Club newsletter)

**Family Member** - \$0 (Grants full membership to all amateurs residing at one domicile on payment of one member's "Full Member" annual dues and entitlement to one Club Newsletter sent to one domicile or email address. All members of said family are eligible for YCCC member benefits.)

**Student Member** - \$10 (Grants full membership to students at a reduced level. Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper or electronic delivery of the Club Newsletter.)

**Subscription** - \$\*\* (A "supportive friend of YCCC" - not a member but a possible candidate for future membership. Only receives club newsletter in paper or electronic form. \$10 for electronic "Ebutt" delivery domestically or overseas or \$25 for domestic paper delivery.)

**Club members** who move out of club territory and so are not eligible to contribute to club aggregate scores can continue to participate in the Club's e-mail reflector and receive the electronic "Ebutt" delivery of newsletter at no cost.

You can tell if you owe dues by checking your 'Butt mailing label or the Club roster in the Members Only section of the website. **Mail your dues to the club treasurer, Chet Slabinski, N8RA, 200 Mount Parnassus Rd, East Haddam, CT 06423.**

**SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES** should be sent to the Scuttlebutt editor, Steve Rodowicz N1SR, by E-mail at [n1sr@arrrl.net](mailto:n1sr@arrrl.net). The deadline for each issue is the 10th of the preceding month..

**Scuttlebutt Advertising:** Nominal Business Card sized ad, \$50 per year (6 appearances)

**CONTEST SCORES** should be sent to the club scorekeeper, Alec Berman, W2JU, preferably by E-mail at [scores@yccc.org](mailto:scores@yccc.org). Please include details such as numbers of QSOs, QSO points (if appropriate), and multipliers (all types); entry category; and power.

## CLUB GOODIES

**BADGES** YCCC badges are available from Tony, K1KP. Send \$3, name and call desired on the badge, and your mailing address to Tony.

**APPAREL** Contact Richie, W1STT. Email: [richd1313@aol.com](mailto:richd1313@aol.com)

**YCCC LOGO ITEMS** <http://www.cafepress.com/nlik>

**QSL CARDS** are ordered through Tom, W1TO. To order, complete the QSL form from the YCCC website, send it to W1TO who will verify all information is included and send to UX5UO after resolving any issues. You will receive a proof copy directly from UX5UO. Approve the proof after resolving any issues with UX5UO. Email acceptance to UX5UO with copy to W1TO. Current price is \$45/thousand (matte) and \$49/thousand heavy matte. Payment to UX5UO representative, KD4POJ at Mr David Lipscomb, KD4POJ, 4201 13<sup>th</sup> Street NE, Minot, ND, 58703. eMail: [kd4poj@srt.com](mailto:kd4poj@srt.com)

**MEMBERSHIP ROSTER** is posed on the YCCC website. Updates are published in 'Movers and Shakers' when members move or change callsigns.

**COMPUTER STUFF INTERNET REFLECTOR** There is an Internet mailing list for YCCC members. To subscribe, go to <https://groups.io/g/yccc/join> and enter your email address.

**WWW HOME PAGE** Come visit us at <http://www.yccc.org> Our Webmaster is Lyn Glagowski, WB1CCL.

**QSL BUREAU – The W1 QSL BUREAU** is sponsored by the YCCC. For more information at: [www.w1qsl.org](http://www.w1qsl.org)  
Address: W1 QSL Bureau, PO Box 73, Marlborough, MA 01752-0073. Email address: [w1qsl@w1qsl.org](mailto:w1qsl@w1qsl.org)

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**DXAC:** New England Bob Beaudet, W1YRC     **Hudson** OPEN     **Atlantic** Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

**ARRL LIAISON:** Bart J. Jahnke, W9JJ     **Hudson** Frederick Lass, K2TR     **Atlantic** Joe Taylor, K1JT

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